

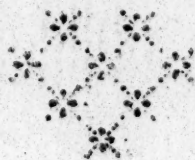
1568/1511.

THE
Scripture Doctrine
CONCERNING
PREDESTINATION,
ELECTION. and REPROBATION.

Extracted from a late *Author*.

By JOHN WESLEY, M. A. Fellow
of Lincoln College, Oxford.

Therefore we both labour, and suffer Reproach, because
we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all
Men, specially of them that believe. 1 Tim. iv. 10.



L O N D O N:
Printed by R. HAWES, (No. 34.) Lamb-Street,
Near Spital-Square. 1775.



T H E

SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE, &c.

1. **T**H E Scripture saith, ¹ *God hath chosen us in Christ, before the Foundation of the World, that we should be holy, and without Blame before him in Love.* And St. Peter calls the Saints, ² *Elect according to the Foreknowledge of God the Father, thro' Sanctification of the Spirit, unto Obedience.* And St. Paul saith unto them, ³ *God hath from the beginning chosen you to Salvation, thro' Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth; whereunto he hath called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2. From all these Places of Scripture it is plain that God hath chosen some to Life and Glory, before or from the Foundation of the World. And the Wisdom of all Christians is, To labour that their Judgments may be informed herein, according to the Scripture. And to that End let us consider the manner of God's speaking to the Sons of Men.

A 2

3. God

¹ *Ephes. i. 4.* ² *1 Pet. i. 2.* ³ *Thess. ii. 13.*

3. God saith to *Abraham*, Rom. iv. 17. *As it is written, I have made thee a Father of many Nations before him whom he believed, even God who quickeneth the Dead, and calleth Things that are not as tho' they were.* Observe, God speaks then, at that present Time, to *Abraham*, saying, *I have made thee a Father of many Nations*, notwithstanding *Abraham* was not at that Time the Father of one Child, but *Ismael*. How then must we understand *I have made thee a Father of many Nations*?

4. The Apostle tells us plainly, it was so, *Before God, who calleth Things that are not, as tho' they were.* And so he calleth *Abraham*, *The Father of many Nations*, tho' he was not as yet; tho' he was not as yet the Father even of *Isaac*, in whom his Seed was to be called.

5. God useth the same Manner of Speaking, when he calleth Christ, *The Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*; altho' in Deed he was not slain for several thousand Years after. Hence therefore we may easily understand what he speaketh of *Electing us from the Foundation of the World*,

6. God calleth *Abraham a Father of many Nations*, tho' not so at that Time. He calleth Christ *The Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*, tho' not slain till he was a Man in the Flesh. Even so he calleth Men *Elect from the Foundation of the World*, tho' not elected till they were Men in the Flesh. Yet it is all so before God, who knowing all things from Eternity, calleth *Things that are not, as tho' they were.*

7. By all which it is clear, that as Christ was called *The Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*, and yet not slain till several thousand Years after, till the Day of his Death; so also Men are called *Elect from the foundation of the World*, and yet are not elected perhaps till several thousand Years after, till the Day of their Conversion to God.

8. And indeed this is plain, without going farther, from those very Words of St. Peter, *Elect, according to the Fore-knowledge of God, thro' Sanctification of the Spirit, unto Obedience.* For.

I

If the Elect are chosen thro' the Sanctification of the Spirit, then they were not chosen before they were sanctify'd by the Spirit. But they were not sanctify'd by the Spirit, before they had a Being. It is plain then neither were they chosen from the Foundation of the World. But *God calleth Things that are not, as tho' they were.*

9. This is also plain from those Words of St. Paul, *God hath from the beginning chosen you unto Salvation, thro' Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth.* Now,

If the Saints are chosen to Salvation, thro' believing of the Truth, and were called to believe that Truth by the hearing of the Gospel, then they were not chosen before they believed the Truth, and before they heard the Gospel, whereby they were called to believe. But they were chosen thro' Belief of the Truth, and called to believe it by the Gospel. Therefore they were not chosen before they believed; much less before they had a Being, any more than Christ was slain, before he had a Being. So plain is it, that they were not elected, till they believed; altho' *God calleth Things that are not, as tho' they were.*

10. Again, how plain is it, where St. Paul saith that they whom ¹ *God did predestinate, according to the Counsel of his own Will, to be to the Praise of his Glory,* were such as did first trust in Christ? And in the very next Verse, he saith, that they *trusted in Christ, after they heard the Word of Truth* (not before.) But they did not hear the Word before they were born. Therefore, it is plain, the Act of Election is *in Time*, tho' known of God before; who, according to his Knowledge, often speaketh of the Things *which are not, as tho' they were.* And thus is the great Stumbling-block about Election taken away, that Men may make their *Calling and Election sure.*

11. The Scripture tells us as plainly what Predestination is: It is, God's fore-appointing obedient Believers to Salvation, not without, but *according to his Foreknowledge of all their Works, from the Foundation of the World.* And so likewise he predestinates or fore-ap-

A 3

point.

¹ *Ephes. i. 11, 12,*

points all disobedient Unbelievers to Damnation, not without, but *according to his Fore-knowledge* of all their Works, *from the Foundation of the World.*

12. We may consider this a little farther. God from the Foundation of the world, fore-knew all men's believing or not believing. And according to this his Fore-knowledge, he chose or *elect*ed all obedient Believers, as such, to Salvation, and refused or *reprob*ated all disobedient Unbelievers, as such, to Damnation, Thus the Scriptures teach us to consider *Election* and *Reprobation*, *according to the Fore-knowledge of God from the Foundation of the World.*

14. But here some may object, that I hold our Faith and Obedience to be the Cause of God's electing us to Glory.

I answer, I do hold, That Faith in Christ producing Obedience to him is *a Cause without which* God electeth none to Glory; for we never read of God's electing to Glory, any who liv'd and died a disobedient Unbeliever. But I do not hold, that it is *the Cause for which* he elects any: The contrary of this is easily shewn, thus

Suppose my Obedience is a Cause of my Election to Salvation, What is the Cause of my Obedience?

Ans. My Love to Christ.

But what is the Cause of my Love to Christ?

Ans. My Faith in Christ.

But what is the Cause of my Faith in Christ?

Ans. The Preaching of the Gospel of Christ.

But what is the Cause of the Preaching of the Gospel to us? *Ans.* Christ's dying for us.

But what is the Cause of Christ's dying for us?

Ans. God's great Love of Pity wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in Trespasses and Sins,

14. Thus all Men may see, that I do not hold God chose any Man to Life and Salvation for any Good which he had done, or for any which was in him, before he put it there. And this I shall now shew more at large from the Oracles of God.

1. God's great Love of Pity, wherewith he loved the Sons of Men, even while they were dead in Trespasses and Sins, was the Cause of his sending his Son to die

die for them ; as appears from the following Scriptures :

1 *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the End that all who believe in him, should not perish but have everlasting Life. For* 2 *when we were yet without Strength, in due Time Christ died for the Ungodly. And, God commendeth his Love to us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.*

2. Christ's dying for our sins is the Cause of the Gospel's being preach'd to us, as appears from those Scriptures, 3 *Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in Heaven and Earth. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations. 4 Go ye into all the World and preach the Gospel to every Creature.*

3. The Gospel's being preached to Sinners is the Cause of their believing, as appears from those Scriptures, 5 *How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a Preacher? So then Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*

4. Men's believing is the cause of their Justification, as appears from those Scriptures, 6 *By him all that Believe are justified from all Things. 7 He is the Justifier of all that believe in Jesus. Therefore we conclude that a Man is justified by Faith, without the Deeds of the Law.* 8 *Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for Righteousness. Now it was not written for his Sale alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus from the Dead; who was delivered for our Offences, and rose again for our Justification.*

5. Our knowing ourselves justified by Faith is the Cause of our Love to Christ, as appears from these Scriptures, 9 *Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins. 10 We love him, because he first loved us.*

B 3

6. Our

1 *John* iii. 16. 2 *Rom.* v. 6. *Ec.* 3 *Matt.* xxviii. 18. 4 *Mark* xvi. 15. 5 *Rom* x. 15. *Ec.*
6 *Acts* xiii. 39. 7 *Rom.* iii. 26. *Ec.* 8 *Rom.* iv. 3, 23. *Ec.* 9 *1 John* iv. 19. 10 *1 John* iv. 19.

6. Our Love to Christ is the Cause of our obeying him, as appears from those Scriptures, ¹ *If ye love me keep my Commandments. He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. And, If any Man love me he will keep my Words.* ² *For this is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments.*

7. Our obeying Christ is the Cause of his giving us eternal Life, as appears from those Scriptures, ³ *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.* ⁴ *Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in thro' the Gates into the City.* And ⁵ *Christ being made perfect thro' sufferings he became the Author of eternal Salvation to all that obey him.*

15. This may be more briefly exprest thus :

1. God's Love was the Cause of his sending his Son to die for Sinners.

2. Christ's dying for Sinners is the Cause of the Gospel's being preached.

3. The preaching of the Gospel is the Cause (or Means) of our believing.

4. Our believing is the Cause (or Condition) of our Justification.

5. The knowing ourselves justified thro' his Blood, is the Cause of our Love to Christ.

6. Our Love to Christ is the Cause of our Obedience to him.

7. Our Obedience to Christ is the Cause of his becoming the Author of eternal Salvation to us.

16. These following Things therefore ought well to be considered by all that fear God.

1. There was a Necessity of God's Love in sending his Son to die for us, without which he had not come to die.

2. There was a Necessity of Christ's Love, in dying for us, without which the Gospel could not have been preached.

3. There

¹ *John xiv. 15, 21. &c.* ² *1 John v. 3.* ³ *Matt. vii. 21.* ⁴ *Rev. xxii. 14.* ⁵ *Heb. v. 9.*

3. There was a Necessity of the Gospel's being preached, without which there could have been no believing.

4. There is a Necessity of our believing the Gospel, without which we cannot be justified.

5. There is a Necessity of our being justified by Faith in the Blood of Christ, without which we cannot come to know that he *loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood.*

6. There is a necessity of our knowing his love, who first loved us, without which we cannot love him again.

7. There is a Necessity of our loving him, without which we cannot keep his Commandments.

8. There is a Necessity of our keeping his commandments, without which we cannot enter into eternal life.

By all which we see, that there is as great a Necessity of our keeping the Commandments of God, as there was of God's sending his Son into the World, or of Christ's dying for our Sins.

17. But for whose Sins did Christ die? Did he die for *All Men*, or but for *Some*?

To this also I shall answer by the Scriptures, shewing

1. The Testimony of all the Prophets. 2. Of the Angel of God. 3. Of Christ himself. And 4. Of his Apostles.

First, The Prophet Isaiah saith thus, 1 Surely he hath born our Grievs, and carried our Sorrows; yet did we esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for our Iniquities, the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like Sheep, have gone astray; we have turn'd every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquities of us all. Thus Isaiah sheweth plainly, that the Iniquities of all those who went astray, were laid upon Christ. And to him the Testimony of all the other Prophets agreeth: 2 To him give all the Prophets Witness, that thro' his Name whosoever believeth in him shall receive Remission of Sins. The same saith that
great

great Prophet *John the Baptist*, who ¹ *came to bear Witness of the Light, that all Men thro' it might believe.* And again, ² *Behold, saith he, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World.* Thus have all the Prophets with one consent testified, that God laid upon Christ the Iniquities of all that were gone astray; that he is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the Sins of the World; that all men thro' him may believe; and that thro' his Name whosoever believeth in him, shall receive Remission of Sins.

Secondly, The Angel of God testified the same thing, saying, ³ *Fear not; for I bring you glad Tidings of great Joy, which shall be to all People,* which was, that there was born unto them a Saviour, even Christ the Lord. By this also it appears, that Christ died for all Men. For else it could not have been glad Tidings of great Joy, to all People; but rather sad Tidings to all those for whom he died not.

Thirdly, We come now to the Words of Christ himself, who knew his own Business better than any man else; and therefore, if his testimony agree with these we must needs be convinced that they are true. Now, he speaks thus, ⁴ *As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son to condemn the World, but that the World thro' him might be saved. Thus we see the words of Christ agree with the words of the Prophets; therefore it must needs be own'd that Christ died for all.

Fourthly, And now we will hear what the Apostles say concerning this thing. ⁵ *The Love of Christ, saith the Apostle Paul, constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them*

¹ John i. 7. ² v. 29. ³ Luke ii. 10. ⁴ John iii. 14. &c. ⁵ 2 Cor. v. 14. &c.

them, and rose again. And to Timothy he saith, ¹ there is one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Again, he saith to Titus, ² The Grace of God, which bringeth Salvation to all Men, hath appeared. And yet again to the Hebrews, ³ that he, by the Grace of God, tasted death for every Man. And to this agreeth St. John, witnessing, ⁴ He is the Propitiation for our Sins; and not for our's only, but also for the Sins of the whole World. And again, speaking of himself and the rest of the Apostles, he saith, ⁵ We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son, to be the Saviour of the World. Thus we have the Testimony of all the Prophets, of the Angel of God, of Christ himself, and of his holy Apostles, all agreeing together in one to prove, that Christ died for all mankind.

18. What then can they, who deny this, say? Why, they commonly say, *All Men*, in these Scriptures, does not mean *All Men*, but only *the Elect*; that *Every Man* here does not mean *Every Man*, but only every one of the *Elect*; that *The World*, does not mean *the whole World*, but only the World of Believers; and that *the whole World*, in St. John's Words, does not mean *the whole World*, but only, *The whole World of the Elect*.

19. To this shameless, senseless Evasion, I answer thus:

If the Scripture no where speaks of a World of Believers or Elect, then we have no Ground, Reason, Pretence or Excuse for saying, Christ died only for a world of Believers or Elect. But the Scripture no where speaks of such a World. Therefore we have no Ground or Pretence for speaking thus.

Nay, the Scripture is so far from calling Believers or elected Persons, *the World*, that they are every where in Scripture plainly and expressly distinguished from *The World*. ⁶ *If ye were of the World*, saith Christ, *the World would love its own; but because I have chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hateth you.*

20. But

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. ² Tit. ii. 11. ³ Heb. ii. 9.
⁴ 1 John ii. 2. ⁵ 1 John iv. 14. ⁶ John xv. 19.

20. But let the Scripture itself speak, what World Christ died for. ¹ *When we were yet without Strength, Christ died for the Ungodly. While we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us. When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* From all which we may clearly see, that Christ died for the *World of the Ungodly*, for the *World of Sinners*, for the *World of his Enemies*; the Just One for the *World of the unjust*. But the Elect, as Elect, are not unjust. Therefore he died not for the Elect, as Elect; but even for that World, St. John speaks of, when he says, *The whole World lieth in Wickedness.*

21. If it be said, "The Elect were Sinners once as well as others;" I answer, True; but not *as they are Elect in Christ*, but as they were *out of Christ, without Hope and without God in the World*. Therefore, to say that Christ died for the Elect, as Elect, is absolute Nonsense and Confusion.

22. To put this matter out of Doubt, I would commend these following considerations to all sober-minded Men.

1. The Scripture saith, Christ *came to seek and to save that which was lost.*

But the Elect, as Elect, were not lost.

Therefore Christ died not for the Elect, as or because they were Elect; for that had been to seek and save what was found and saved before.

2. The Scripture saith, Christ died for *the Unjust.*

But the Elect, as such, are not unjust.

Therefore, Christ died not for the Elect, as Elect; for that had been to justify them who were just before.

3. The Scripture saith, *He came to preach deliverance to the Captive.*

But the Elect, as Elect, are not captive; for Christ hath set them free.

Therefore he died not for the Elect, as Elect; for that had been to set them at Liberty who were at Liberty before.

4. The Scripture saith, *He quickened them who were dead in Trespasses and Sins, such as were without Christ, Aliens*

¹ Rom. v. 6, 10.

Aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and Strangers to the Covenant of Promise, without Hope and without God in the World.

But the Elect, as such, are not *dead in Trespasses and Sins*, but *alive unto God*. Neither are they *without Christ*; for they are chosen *in him*: Nor are they *Aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, and Strangers to the Covenant of Promise*. But they are *Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and the Household of God*.

Therefore Christ died not for the Elect, as *or* because they were Elect. For that had been to quicken them that were alive before, and to bring them into Covenant, who were in Covenant before. And thus, by these Men's Account, our Lord lost his labour of Love, and accomplished **A SOLEMN NOTHING** !

23. Thus having shewn the grievous Folly of those who say, that *Christ died for none but the Elect*, I shall now prove by undeniable Reasons, that *he died for all Mankind*.

Reas. 1. Because all the Prophets, the Angel of God, Christ himself, and his holy Apostles with one Consent, affirm it.

Reas. 2 Because there is not one Scripture, from the Beginning of *Genesis* to the End of the *Revelation*, that denies it, either negatively, by saying, that *he did not die for all*; or affirmatively, by saying, that *he did die but for some*.

Reas. 3. Because he himself commanded, that the Gospel should be preached to *every Creature*.

Reas. 4. Because *he callth all Men*, every where to *repent*.

Reas. 5. Because those who perish, are damned for *not believing in the Name of the only begotten Son of God*, Therefore, he must have died for *them*. Else they would be damn'd for *not believing a Lye*.

Reas. 6. Because they which are damn'd might have been saved. For thus saith the Word of God, *They received not the Love of the Truth that they might be saved*.

saved. Therefore God shall send them strong Delusions, to believe a Lie, that they all may be damned.

Reas. 7. Because some deny the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift Destruction. But they could not deny the Lord that bought them, if he had not bought them at all.

23. I shall now briefly shew the dreadful Absurdities that follow from saying *Christ died only for the Elect.*

1. If Christ died not for All, then Unbelief is no Sin in them that finally perish; seeing there is not any Thing for those Men to believe unto Salvation, for whom Christ died not.

2. If Christ died not for All Men, then it would be a Sin in the greatest part of Mankind to believe he died for Them; seeing it would be to believe a Lye.

3. If Christ died not for those that are damned, then they are not damned for Unbelief. Otherwise, you say, that they are damned for not believing a Lie.

4. If Christ died not for All, then those who obey Christ, by going and preaching the Gospel to every Creature, as glad Tidings of Grace and Peace of great Joy to all People, do sin thereby, in that they go to most People with a Lye in their Mouth.

5. If Christ died not for All Men, then God is not in Earnest in calling all Men every where to repent; For what good could Repentance do those, for whom Christ died not?

6. If Christ died not for all, then why does he say *He is not willing that any should perish?* Surely he is willing, yea resolved that most Men should perish; else he would have died for them also.

7. How shall God judge the World by the Man Christ Jesus, if Christ did not die for the World? Or how shall he judge them according to the Gospel, when there was never any Gospel or Mercy them?

25. But, say some, "If Christ died for all, why are not all saved?"

I answer, *Because they believe not in the Name of the only begotten Son of God. Because God called, and they refused to answer; he stretched out his Hand, and they regarded not; he counselled them, but they would*

none

none of his Counsels; he reprov'd them; but they set at nought all his Reproofs; they followed after lying Vanities, and forsook their own Mercies; they denied the Lord that bought them, and so brought upon themselves swift Destruction; And because they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved, therefore (if you would know wherefore) God gave them up to believe a Lye, and to be damned. How often (saith our Lord) would I have gathered you together, and ye would not? Ye would not. Here is the plain Reason, why all Men are not saved. For God promiseth no Man Salvation, whether he will or no. But leaveth them to everlasting Destruction, who will not believe and obey the Gospel.

26. "O, then you are an *Arminian*! You are a *Free-willer*. You hold Free-will in Man!"

I hold nothing but what the Scripture saith; and that you shall give me Leave to hold. I do not hold, that any Man has any Will or Power of himself, to do any Thing that is Good; but by the Grace of God we may do all Things. I have already shewn, he hath given Christ for all Men. And he who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all Things? And what Man knoweth not, that is, if he make Use of all the Will and Power God hath given him, God will double his Talent, and give him more? If any therefore desire to have more, let him faithfully improve what he has. Likewise what Man is he, who doth not know that he is not condemn'd, for not doing what he could not do, but for leaving undone what he could have done if he would. Let any Man deny it if he can.

27. "What then, may all Men be saved if they will?"

Before I answer this Question directly, I shall shew that those who ask it, are themselves compell'd to grant as much Freedom of Will, as we desire to plead for.

For 1. The Assembly of Divines, in their Confession of Faith, c. 9. do expressly say, *God hath endowed the Will of Man with that natural Liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute Necessity determined to do Good*

or Evil. 2. Mr. Baxter, in the Preface of his *Call to the Unconverted*, says, that Calvin as well as Arminius held Free-will, and that no Man of Brains denieth, that Man hath a Will that is naturally free; it is free from Violence, it is a self-determining Principle. Sure here is as much said for Free-will, as any Man need to say, and perhaps more. For,

The Difference between us, is this. They say, *Man hath a Will which is naturally free.* We say, *Man hath this Freedom of Will, not naturally, but by Grace.*

We believe, that in the Moment Adam fell, he had no Freedom of Will left; But that God, when of his own Free-Grace he gave the Promise of a Saviour to him and his Posterity, graciously restored to Mankind a Liberty and Power to accept of proffered Salvation. And in all this, Man's boasting is excluded; the whole of that which is Good in him, even from the first Motion of his Will, being of Grace and not of Nature. And now we come directly to the Question, Whether All Men may be saved if they will?

28. To those who have consider'd what has been premised; I answer, 1. What should hinder them if they be willing? For 2. God is not willing that any should perish; yea 3. He is willing that all Men should be sav'd. And Christ is willing; for he came not to judge the World, but to save the World. And how did he weep over Jerusalem? How often would he have gather'd them together, even as an Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, but they would not? And now, what hinders Men's Salvation, but that same, *they would not?*

29. They would not, they will not come at Christ's Call, and hearken to his Reproof, and wait for his Counsels, and receive Power from on high to live to him who died for them, walking in all his Commandments and Ordinances blameless, and following him whithersoever he goeth. This way is so narrow that few care to walk therein; and therefore they are not saved, even because they reject the Counsel of God against themselves. They choose Death; therefore they perish everlastingly.

E I N I S.

us
at
om
ere
y.

Tan
ub

ad
his
to
ind
on.
ole
lo-
re.
her

re-
hey
uld
l be
e the
eep
er'd
rens
what
not?
ist's
r his
e to
and-
him
that
not
ainst
pe-